

# AVERY

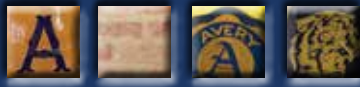
**MESSENGER**

WINTER 2013/2014



**EDUCATION  
continues at  
AVERY**





A Publication of the

## **AVERY RESEARCH CENTER**

FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

College of Charleston

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## **AVERY INSTITUTE**

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# EDUCATION CONTINUES AT AVERY!

**On the Front Cover:** In the late 1800s through to 1954, the Avery Institute served as a center for education. Today, the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture, housed in the original Avery Institute building, is part of the College of Charleston's library system. It still serves as a center for education with an archive, reading room, museum, and an active education outreach and public programming schedule. This cover of the *Avery Messenger* features students from the North Charleston Elementary School after an educational program overlayed on an image of the Avery Institute student body (ca. 1920), both photographed on the front steps of the Avery building. **Education continues at Avery!**

*The 1920 photo is from the Avery Research Center Photograph Collection. Cover art by artist Andrae Harrison.*

**On the Back Cover:** Installed in 2011, the Bottle Tree on the front lawn the Avery Research Center is a permanent sculpture inspired by the twentieth anniversary of the groundbreaking film, *Daughters of the Dust*, and its examination of Gullah Geechee traditions. The Bottle Tree was blessed and bottles were placed on its branches during our conference, "We Carry These Memories Inside of We."

*Bottle Tree Sculptor: Jean-Marie Mauclet; Consultant: Arianne King-Comer, textile artist.*

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## **AVERY RESEARCH CENTER** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

PATRICIA WILLIAMS LESSANE, PHD

Dear Avery Research Center Supporter:

I continue to be amazed by the outpouring of support we get for the work we do at the Avery Research Center. This year, we have seen our visitor numbers increase as well as the demography of our constituents expand through partnerships with the South Carolina ACLU, Southerners on New Ground (SONG), and South Carolina Equality. We partnered with the Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and the Medical University of South Carolina to screen *Kunta Kinteh Island: Returning Home without Shackles* to a standing room-only crowd. Additionally, we partnered with the Lowcountry Rice Project to exhibit new original works by acclaimed artist Jonathan Green and collaborated with College of Charleston's African American Studies program to host a thoughtful and provocative dialogue about Black gender and sexuality at our third annual conference. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Avery Institute Board for its generous donation of \$10,000 that made our conference a reality.

This year, we have had the pleasure of hosting many noteworthy scholars and artists including Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Dr. Ysaye Barnwell, Julie Dash, writer Joan Morgan, and playwright and author, Ifa Baeza.

In keeping with our tradition of community outreach and partnership, we worked with Tugg film distribution company, local promoter Ms. Sylvia Robinson, and the James Island Carmike Cinema to screen *Free Angela and All Political Prisoners* as a free community event. The feedback from the film and our involvement was spectacular and we look forward to bringing other important films to Charleston.

Further along in the newsletter, you will read about our Stanford University/Avery Research Center internship. This year was the inaugural launch of this initiative, and recent Stanford graduate Milton Achelpohl was our summer intern. Milton brought energy, intellect, and a fresh perspective to our work here.

We also hosted our first Visiting Scholar, Dr. Sabine Broeck, who is a professor of Black Studies and English-Speaking Cultures at University of Bremen in Bremen, Germany. A seasoned scholar and sought-after lecturer, Dr. Broeck spent a month in residence at Avery Research Center where she gave public lectures, brown bag talks, and participated in the Unleashing the Black Erotic Conference as a presenter. Recognizing so many nascent opportunities for partnership between The College of Charleston and the University of Bremen, Dr. Broeck and I met with College of Charleston faculty and administrators to discuss ideas and plans for future collaboration.

Lastly, I'd like to officially welcome Dr. Mary Battle, our new Public Historian. Dr. Battle recently received her doctorate in American Studies from Emory University. She brings a wealth of knowledge in public programs and digital humanities development.

As always, I am delighted to serve at helm of the Avery Research Center and I look forward to our continued work together!

Best,  
pwl

## **AVERY INSTITUTE** PRESIDENT'S REPORT

CATHERINE BOAGS



Hello Everyone,

Our annual meeting was held on Saturday, June 22, 2013. I want to thank our members for taking the time to show support by attending the meeting. The program recognized former Directors of the Avery Research Center, including:

- Dr. Myrtle Glascoe (1985-1993)
- Dr. W. Marvin Dulaney (1994-2000, 2004-2008)
- Dr. Robert Edison (2000)
- Dr. Karen Chandler (2001-2004)

Interim Directors Mr. Oliver Smalls (1993-1994) and Ms. Georgette Mayo (2008-2010) were recognized as well as Avery Research Center staff, volunteers, and teachers.

The Board of Directors for September 2013-June 2014 was installed at the annual meeting. Leaving the Board this year are Elisabeth Greene and Emma Williams. I want to thank them for their years of dedicated service and support of the Avery Institute. We also mourn the loss of dedicated Board member Mrs. Virginia Morgan. She will be missed.

The new Avery Institute Board held its first meeting on Monday, September 11, 2013. Officers of the 2013-2014 Board were elected as follows: President, Catherine Boags; Vice President, Pearl Gibbs; Treasurer, John Buncum; and Secretary, Angel Payton-Harmon.

This year, the Institute Board was able to make a contribution of \$10,000 to the Avery Research Center for programming. This is a direct result of the support of our membership. Your contributions make a significant impact on the viability of programs and exhibits that the Avery Research Center is able to present. Thank you again for your support. We will be reaching out to you again in December. Please remember that your donations enable us to carry out the mission of the Avery Institute.

September and October were fantastic months with activities, including Dr. Ysaye M. Barnwell, who spoke on "The Evolution of African-American Music", and presentations by Avery Research Center visiting scholar Dr. Sabine Broeck, Professor of Black Studies at the University of Bremen, Germany.

Hopefully, you were able to attend the conference held on September 18-21, 2013, "Unleashing the Black Erotic: Gender and Sexuality-Passion, Power, and Praxis". The speakers were dynamic. It was a very informative conference.

Work continues on providing timely information to our members concerning the Avery Institute and ongoing activities at the Avery Research Center via our website. Please visit [www.averyinstitute.us](http://www.averyinstitute.us).

Thank you for your continued support of the Avery Institute and the Avery Research Center.

# ARCHIVE NEWS

by Aaron Spelbring & Georgette Mayo

## ACQUISITIONS AND DIGITIZATION

**A**very Research Center recently received digital copies of oral history interviews conducted by StoryCorps. The collection contains thirty-five interviews. Highlights of the collection are interviews with Drs. Karen Chandler and Patricia Williams Lessane discussing their work at the Avery Research Center; Cynthia McCottry-Smith on the Phillis Wheatley Literary and Social Club; Dr. Herman Blake on his education and Sea Island research; and Judge Bernard Fielding on the impact of Herbert DeCosta, Jr.'s preservation work. StoryCorps is an independent nonprofit whose mission is to provide people of all backgrounds and beliefs with the opportunity to record, share, and preserve their stories. For more information, please visit <http://storycorps.org>.

Avery Research Center also received the papers of activist/civic trailblazer, **Marjorie Amos-Frazier** from her daughters. Marjorie Amos-Frazier served as a shop steward negotiating contracts and soliciting union memberships while working at the American Tobacco Company. She was the first woman to be elected to the Charleston County Council in 1974 and during her six-year tenure, she served as chairperson of the Human Services Committee. Amos-Frazier continued to break barriers when, in 1980, she was the first woman, African American, and non-legislator elected by the General Assembly to the South Carolina Public Service Commission. This collection bolsters Avery Research Center's existing holdings in labor and civil rights history.



Marjorie Amos-Frazier

Portions of the **Bernice Robinson and Esau Jenkins** Collections pertaining to "Citizenship Schools" in the Lowcountry are being digitized for inclusion in the Avery Research Center's digital collections with the Lowcountry Digital Library (LCDL). Civil Rights leaders such as Robinson, Jenkins, and Septima Clark established Citizenship Schools in South Carolina during the mid-twentieth century in response to voter registration requirements in southern states that included tests for literacy and the ability to interpret certain portions of the U.S. Constitution. Whites often unjustly administered these tests as a barrier to prevent southern African Americans from voting. The Citizenship Schools developed from adult literacy programs established by the Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee, and they taught adults to read and develop leadership skills. Future Avery Research Center digital collection projects with LCDL include digitizing the **Septima Clark** Collection.

## Digital Collections

### Avery Research Center Oral History Collections

The Avery Research Center houses a variety of oral history interviews, largely documenting African-American experiences in the Lowcountry. Oral history projects include the Avery Normal Institute documentation effort and the Sea Island Preservation Initiative.

### Avery Research Center Artifact Collection

This is a collection of images of the Avery Research Center's artifact collections. The collections hold an array of objects, from slave shackles to artwork by contemporary African-American artists.

The largest of Avery Research Center's artifact collections is the **Joseph A. Towles Collection**, donated by the famous anthropologist Colin Turnbull, who studied extensively in the Ituri forest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition to African artifacts, this collection also contains objects from Turnbull's and Towles's trips to China and India.

### Craft and Crum Families, 1780-2007

This collection of artifacts pertaining to the Craft and Crum families of the Lowcountry includes a myriad of materials: photo albums, letters, account books, and land deeds. The Craft Family Photo Album includes images of Craft family members, famous abolitionists, and other family friends—many of international historical significance. Also included in the collection are legal documents pertaining to the family land, Woodville Plantation.

### Cleveland L. Sellers, Jr. Papers, 1934-2003

The Cleveland L. Sellers, Jr. Papers collection is comprised of papers relating to the Orangeburg Massacre, February 5-8, 1968. Included in the collection is a poem, a collection of Western Union telegrams, press releases, a fact sheet created by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), flyers, photographs, and a resolution from the Student Legislative Council of the University of California at Los Angeles demanding the perpetrators of the violence in Orangeburg be brought to justice.

### Friendly Moralist Society Papers, 1841-1856

The Friendly Moralist Society was a benevolent society for free brown (mulatto or mixed race) men established in Charleston, South Carolina in 1838. This collection contains proceedings of their monthly meetings from 1841-1856, and the Absentee Book, showing member absent and for what reason, from 1842-1849.



### Holloway Family Collection

This collection contains a scrapbook, compiled by James H. Holloway (1849-1913), that contains legal documents, personal and business correspondence, receipts, ephemera, clippings, and photographs pertaining to the Holloway family, a prominent free family of color in Charleston, South Carolina.

### Miriam DeCosta Seabrook and Herbert U. Seabrook Papers

This collection includes correspondence, certificates, photographs, and other materials related to Miriam DeCosta Seabrook's education at Avery Institute and elsewhere; teaching career, and civic involvement; correspondence, speeches, and reports related to Dr. Herbert Seabrook, Sr.'s community and fraternal affiliations as well as his medical career as a

private practitioner and director of the Hospital and Training School for Nurses; and correspondence, memorabilia, and financial documents related to the marriage of Miriam and Herbert Seabrook.

### Septima P. Clark Papers, ca. 1910-ca. 1990

This digital collection contains a scrapbook that includes images, newspaper clippings, and correspondence from the life of Septima P. Clark, a Charleston educator and civil rights activist.

### View all Avery Research Center Digital Collections

<http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/contributing-institution/avery-research-center>

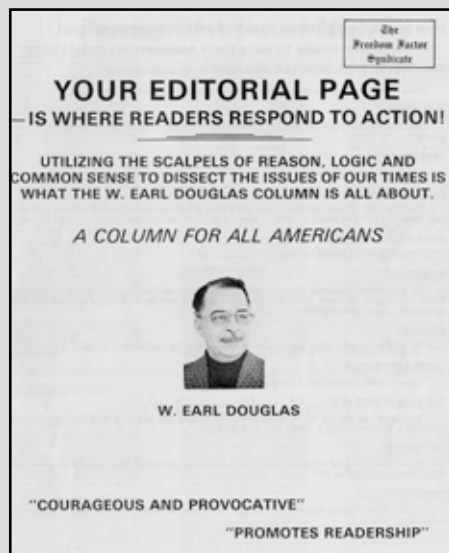
## RECENTLY PROCESSED COLLECTIONS

### THE PHILIP SIMMONS COLLECTION

Philip Simmons (b.1912-d.2009), the renowned master blacksmith known as the "Gate Keeper of Charleston," spent seventy-seven years crafting utilitarian and ornamental ironwork from his shop and home on 30 ½ Blake Street. His work is recognized within the state of South Carolina, nationally, and internationally. As a testament to his craft, Simmons has been honored with numerous awards and recognitions, including the South Carolina Legislature Lifetime Achievement Award (1981), the Elizabeth O'Neill Verner Governor's Award for "Lifetime Achievement in the Arts" (2001), and induction into the South Carolina Hall of Fame (1994). This collection donated by the Philip Simmons Foundation holds personal papers with photographs and business-related documents. The bulk of materials feature preparatory graphite drawings (originals and photocopies) of commissioned and estimates of Simmons' decorative ironwork. Preparatory drawings for commissioned work for institutions include the Philip Simmons Garden Project at St. Johns Reformed Episcopal Church (Charleston, South Carolina); Liberty Square at the Fort Sumter National Monument (Charleston, South Carolina); the Charleston International Airport (South Carolina); the Richland County Public Library (Columbia, South Carolina); Brookgreen Gardens (Pawleys Island, South Carolina); and the Atlanta History Center (Georgia) in addition to numerous businesses and private residences in Charleston, the state of South Carolina, and throughout the United States. The Philip Simmons Collection was processed and digitized through a generous grant from the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation. Holdings are approximately 0.8 linear feet and are comprised of two (2) archival boxes containing materials dating from 1977-2007, with the bulk ranging from 1990-2000.



Master Blacksmith Philip Simmons



Document from the W. Earl Douglas Papers

### WALTER EARL DOUGLAS PAPERS

Walter Earl Douglas (b.1923-d.1979) was a journalist and writer who wrote his newspaper columns, "The Earl of Charleston" and "W. Earl Douglas" from a conservative stance. His columns were featured in South Carolina newspapers, including the *Charleston Chronicle*, *The Charleston Evening Post*, and *Black News* (Columbia), in addition to nationally syndicated papers, including the *Union Leader* (Manchester, New Hampshire). Douglas's writings incorporate his position on political conservatism, African-American culture, socioeconomics, United States government and politics, and international politics, among numerous other topics. The collection documents Douglas's extensive writings through essays and editorials, newspaper clippings of his editorials, transcripts of speeches and television show, *Earl's Byline*, and personal writings of short stories and poems. Correspondence includes letters from newspaper editors William Loeb, III and Thomas R. Waring; US senators Strom Thurmond, Jesse Helms, and Ernest F. Hollings; South Carolina Governor James B. Edwards; and President Jimmy Carter. The Walter Earl Douglas Papers is 3.6 linear feet, comprising of nine (9) archival boxes, and contains documents from 1963-1979, with bulk dates ranging from 1977-1979.

*I'm buildin' me a home  
I'm buildin' me a home  
I'm buildin' me a home  
I'm buildin' me a home  
This earthly heart  
Is gonna soon decay  
And the soul's gotta have,  
oh Lord, somewhere to stay*

*When you hear me prayin'  
I'm buildin' me a home  
When you hear me prayin'  
I'm buildin' me a home  
This earthly heart  
Is gonna soon decay  
And the soul's gotta have,  
oh Lord, somewhere to stay*

In his 1988 break out film *School Daze*, actor/director Spike Lee introduced international audiences to the academic, social, and cultural traditions of historically black colleges and universities, or HBCUs. In that film, the Morehouse Glee club sang the Negro spiritual, "I'm Building Me a Home", whose lyrics reflect the singer's profound and rousing understanding that time on Earth is limited, but the spiritual—the ethereal—is timeless. More importantly, the revelation that "the soul's gotta have some place to say" signals a call for preservation for one's story, one's legacy, one's history. African-American public history stands in the gap between the ancestors of the past, the individual and collective memories of the community, and present and future generations. African-American community members from all walks of

# I'M BUILDING ME A HOME: COMMUNITY BUILDING WITHIN THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN TRADITION—PRESERVATION AND PUBLIC HISTORY

By Patricia Williams Lessane, PhD

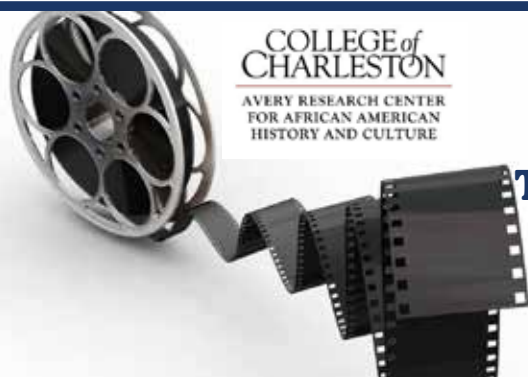
life—from bibliophiles, scholars, librarians, archivists, collectors, museum builders, and professionals to everyday people—have collectively worked to "build a home" for African-American memories in the face of adversity, discrimination, and marginalization, recognizing the paramount importance of preserving and telling our story. The Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture builds upon this commitment by preserving the stories of African Americans in Charleston, the South Carolina Lowcountry, and the African diaspora.

Over the years, the Avery Research Center staff has worked with the Avery Institute Board for Afro-American History and Culture to amass a meaningful body of collections that document the stories of Americans that lie outside the canon of mainstream American history and culture, as these stories reveal different and unique contributions to Americana. We see this in the rich historical documentation of American and African-American history and the insightful commentary that springs from our archival collections and oral histories. For example, the Papers of Millicent E. Brown, and our recent acquisition of oral histories she has collected, reveal a dedication to scholastic excellence and civil right activism. Brown,



who is a professor at Claflin University, comes from a family of activists and community organizers. The impact that such an upbringing has had on her life is evident in her collection; and through her work with the "Somebody Had to Do It" Project, Brown, like the Avery Research Center, is building a home for the memory of African-American organizing, Civil Rights, and desegregation of public schools in South Carolina. But more than that, Brown's work bears witness to the changing landscape of race relations in South Carolina and the evolution of Black education—both in K-12 education and in higher education, specifically at HBCUs.

African-American museums and archival repositories meld American public history with the stories of marginalized people to illuminate a cultural landscape that is more honest, more true, more comprehensive, and more inclusive.



**September 2014  
SYMPOSIUM**

**THE MARROW OF TRADITION:  
Examining Black Film and the  
Construction of Race in American Film**

For more information, visit our website: <http://avery.cofc.edu>

# AVERY RESEARCH CENTER

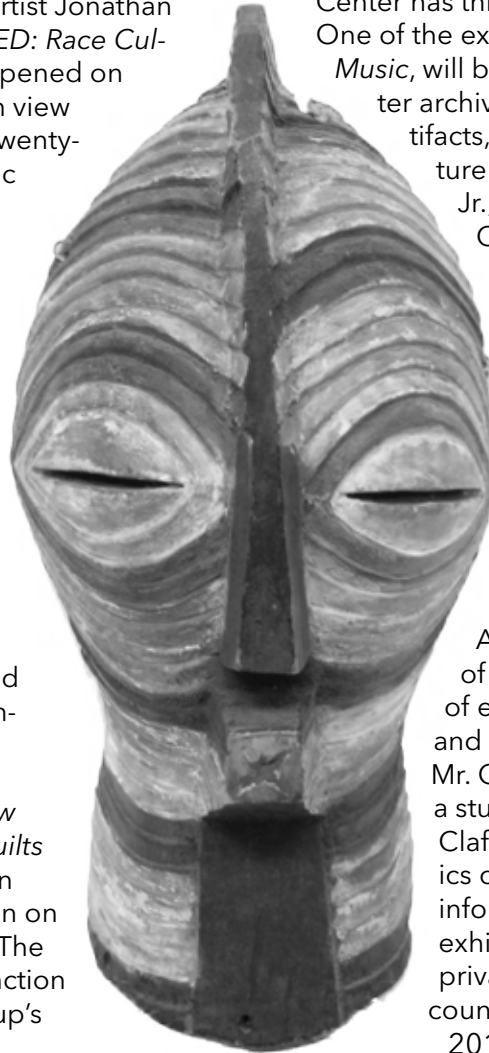
## MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS UPDATE

by Curtis J. Franks

**T**he 2013 fall semester got off to a rousing start at the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture with three exciting exhibition openings. The first show to open was a new body of work by Lowcountry artist Jonathan Green. The show titled *UNENSLAVED: Race Culture Paintings by Jonathan Green* opened on August 29, 2013 and will remain on view through December 15, 2013. The twenty-five original pieces, including acrylic on archival paper and graphite on archival paper, are an integral part of a larger effort spearheaded by Jonathan Green and others for the Lowcountry Rice Culture Project, a not-for-profit entity. According to Green, the Lowcountry Rice Culture Project seeks "to discover and revive the significance of rice cultivation and its legacies, and to use history as a launching point for a much broader discussion on a number of issues relative to the numerous ways in which the rice economy influenced history and culture of this region," and by extension, the entire country.

The second exhibition, *Sew On, Sew On, and Sew On: Contemporary Quilts and Handmade Objects*, opened on September 12, 2013 and will remain on view through December 20, 2013. The exhibition, which opened in conjunction with the American Quilt Study Group's annual meeting, features the wonderful works of fiber artists Wendell George Brown, Catherine Lamkin, Dorothy Montgomery, and Winifred Sanders.

The third exhibition that opened featured a body of work by Beki Crowell, whose mixed media works accented and adorned the McKinley Washington Auditorium during the Unleashing the Black Erotic Conference from September 18-21, 2013.



West African Ceremonial Mask  
Donated by John & Connie Mulleady

### UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

During the spring semester of 2014, Avery Research Center has three wonderful exhibitions on its schedule. One of the exhibitions, *Africa: Masks, Movement, and Music*, will be developed from the Avery Research Center archival holdings and other sources, featuring artifacts, instruments, masks, and other material culture from the following collections: Paul Craven, Jr.; Joseph A. Towles; Barbeau and McCarthy; Catherine and James Yatsco; George Pope; William Stewart; and the John's Island photographic collection. The exhibition will open in early March in advance of the Carolina Lowcountry and Atlantic World (CLAW) annual conference, "Soundscapes: Music from the African Atlantic, 1600-Present" from March 7-9, 2014.

Additionally, the Avery Research Center will also host the work of Lowcountry artists Amiri G. Farris and Floyd Gordon. Amiri Farris, professor of art at the University of South Carolina-Beaufort, creates works full of exuberant color and personal experiences and will exhibit his art from March-June 2014. Mr. Gordon, a graduate of Claflin University and a student of Mr. Arthur Rose—noted chair of the Claflin Art Department—works primarily in acrylics on canvas. His rural South Carolina roots inform his brightly colored creations. He has exhibited widely and his works are in notable private and public collections throughout the country. The exhibition will open in February 2014 and run through April 2014.

### TOURS OF THE MUSEUM GALLERIES

are conducted five times a day,

**Monday-Friday at 10:30am, 11:30am, 1:30pm, 2:30pm, and 3:30pm, except on College of Charleston holidays and winter break.**

**Group tours of 5 or more and Saturday tours are by appointment only.**

**Admission Free - Donations Accepted**

**843.953.7609**



In January 2014, the Avery Research Center will launch a number of online exhibitions with the Lowcountry Digital History Initiative (LDHI). LDHI is a digital public history project hosted by the Lowcountry Digital Library (LCDL) at the College of Charleston. Funded through a pilot project grant from the Humanities Council of South Carolina and a major grant award from the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, LDHI will serve as a digital consultation service, scholarly editorial resource, and online platform for partner institutions and collaborative scholars to translate multi-institutional archival materials, historic landscape features and structures, and scholarly research into digital public history exhibition projects.

A major goal within LDHI's mission is to encourage projects that highlight underrepresented race, class, gender, and labor histories within the Lowcountry region and historically interconnected Atlantic World sites. LDHI online exhibitions produced through Avery Research Center's staff, graduate students, and archival resources will particularly address African-American history and culture from the trans-Atlantic slave trade into the twentieth-century Civil Rights Movement in the South Carolina Lowcountry.

In August 2013, the Avery Research Center also launched a Brown Bag Presentation Series in addition to regular education programs and evening events. The goal of this monthly series is to offer an informal setting for local and visiting scholars, performers, activists, and artists to present their work. All Avery Research Center brown bag presentations are free and open to the public. Unless otherwise noted, the presentations occur from 12:00pm-1:15 pm in the Smart Classroom of the Avery Research Center, 125 Bull Street, Charleston, South Carolina. Please see Avery Research Center's Programs calendar for full listing of upcoming Brown Bag presentations and evening events: <http://avery.cofc.edu/programs/>.

## AVERY RESEARCH CENTER EXHIBITIONS WITH LDHI

### African Passages, Lowcountry Adaptations

An online exhibition series about the history of slavery, plantations, and the trans-Atlantic slave trade from the Atlantic World to Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry. Current exhibitions: *Atlantic World Context and Establishing Slavery in the Carolina Lowcountry*. Upcoming exhibition: *Lowcountry Slavery: Daily Life and Revolutionary Change*. Published 2013-14.

### A History of Burke High School in Charleston, South Carolina since 1894

Burke High School has served students in downtown Charleston, South Carolina for over a century. From its roots as a segregated school for African Americans in the late nineteenth century to an institution that fostered significant student activism during the twentieth-century Civil Rights Movement, Burke's history provides insights into the achievements and challenges of public education in Charleston. Published July 2013.

### The Orangeburg Massacre

An online exhibition outlining the events of the Orangeburg Massacre. On February 8, 1968, South Carolina Highway Patrolmen opened fire on African-American college students protesting against ongoing segregation in Orangeburg, South Carolina. Three students were killed and twenty-eight were wounded. This shooting was one of the most violent events in South Carolina's twentieth-century civil rights history. Published May 2013.

### The Charleston Hospital Workers Strike, 1968-1969

An online exhibition about the development and aftermath of the Charleston Hospital Workers' Strike that happened in Charleston, South Carolina from March to June 1969. Published October 2013.

### Lowcountry Digital History Initiative (LDHI)

<http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu/>

## PUBLIC HISTORY PROGRAMS UPCOMING

### Brown Bag Series, 12:00pm-1:15pm

**January 22** *"Politics of Philanthropy: Henry Lyman Morehouse, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the Naming of Morehouse College,"* Daron Calhoun II (Avery Research Center/College of Charleston)

**February 26** *"The Art of Protest,"* Karole Turner Campbell (Independent Artist)

**March 18** *"Launching the Lowcountry Digital History Initiative,"* Mary Battle (Avery Research Center/College of Charleston)

**April 9** *"Resolving Heirs' Property Issues and Learning the Value of Family Land,"* Jennie Stephens (Center for Heirs' Property Preservation)

### Evening Lecture, 6:30pm

**March 28** *"Forging Freedom: Black Women and the Pursuit of Liberty in Antebellum Charleston,"* Amrita Myers (Indiana University-Bloomington)

### Panel Presentation, 12:00pm-1:15pm

**April 16** *"Graduate Student Experiences in Digital Humanities and Public History: Working on the Lowcountry Digital History Initiative (LDHI),"* Bradley Blankemeyer, Andrew Cuadrado, and Beth Gniewek (College of Charleston/Citadel Joint Master's Program in History, Addlestone Library, Room 227)



# EDUCATION OUTREACH DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

By Shelia Harrell-Roye

In 2013, we expanded our outreach efforts by partnering with schools and other cultural institutions. Some notable outreach programs include a Lowcountry history focus tour with Ashley Hall, an Avery Normal Institute education program with North Charleston Elementary School, and "Race: Assumptions and Perceptions," an outreach program held for fourth graders at the Montessori Community School. Also, a professional development tour and Q&A session with staff from Drayton Hall focused on tour development with emphasis on use of language, inclusion, and accuracy in interpretive presentations.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO ENHANCING EDUCATION IS REFLECTED THROUGH OUR DIVERSE PARTNERSHIPS.

A key collaboration was with the Gibbes Museum of Art Society 1858 for the launch of its "Mixed Media" programming. Held at the Avery Research Center, the event was the perfect opportunity to introduce the Society's supporters to Avery Research Center's resources.

We look forward to an exciting and dynamic 2014 to include a collaboration with the Charleston Chapter of Continental Societies, Incorporated. Joint programming will highlight art and history in educational sessions designed to expand students' critical-thinking skills and expose them to historical figures and events. Our outreach has produced productive partnerships and successful educational programs for students of all ages and backgrounds.



Photos by Avery Research Center  
Graduate Assistant Daron Calhoun



## INTERESTED IN A SPECIALLY CRAFTED EDUCATION TOUR?

Contact: Shelia Harrell-Roye,  
Education Outreach Coordinator  
email: [seharrel@cofc.edu](mailto:seharrel@cofc.edu)  
phone: (843) 953-7613.

**M****R. WALTER G. BROWN, JR.** was born in Charleston, South Carolina and grew up on the city's east-side. From kindergarten through second grade, he was homeschooled by his upstairs neighbor, retired teacher and widow of Wallingford Presbyterian Church's former pastor, Reverend Frasier. Brown then continued his education at the Avery Institute. "School was rigorous and we had fun at recess," Brown recalls, "but we had to get our school work done...all of the students were aware that Avery was all about academics and excellence; and we knew that if we graduated, somehow, we would be going to college."

Remembering the impact Avery had on him, Brown points to being taught "social graces" through the Hi-Y Club, which met at Avery on Sunday afternoons, and was sponsored by Avery administrator/teacher Mr. Alphonso W. Hoursey. Also, Brown recalls that once while working on a term paper for Mrs. Poinsette's English class, he went to the whites-only Charleston County Free Library on Rutledge Avenue. Despite the racial barriers of segregation, the librarians allowed Brown to research his paper, and he received an "A" grade. Poinsette was impressed, though she informed him that as an African American, he should not have been there.

Brown graduated from Avery Institute in 1951 and attended South Carolina State in Orangeburg, South Carolina, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in 1955. Brown chose a focus in education, "because there were only five males in the

South Carolina State elementary education program at that time and it seemed to be a lucrative field." After graduation, he taught at Fairwold Elementary School in Columbia, South Carolina's Greenvew section for three years (1955-1958), before returning home to Charleston to teach at Buist Elementary School. Brown was then moved to James Simons Elementary School, where he shared that he was the "first Afro-American male to teach in public schools in the City of Charleston, before consolidation." Brown taught elementary education to fourth, fifth, and sixth graders for seventeen years.



Walter Brown Jr. (Photo by Tony Bell)

After leaving the classroom, he went to work at the Board of Education's Federal Programs Office, first as administrative assistant, then as coordinator of Federal Programs, and finally as the director of federal programs. In 1991, after twenty-one years, Brown retired from a career in education, but has remained active in local and civic affairs.

In 2005, Walter Brown joined the Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture (AIAAHC) Board and became president in 2006, a position he held until 2012. Brown is now a member of both the AIAAHC Board and the Avery Research Center Advisory Board. The importance of the AIAAHC Board

is to assist the Avery Research Center's endeavors to serve the Lowcountry community. "Those of us who serve on these boards, as Avery graduates or otherwise, should recruit people who have an interest in perpetuating the legacy of the Avery Research Center," Brown says, insisting the Avery Research Center is not just for Avery Institute graduates, and, in fact, serves the entire community.

## NOTABLE VISITING PROFESSORS

In 2013, the Avery Research Center hosted its first Visiting Scholar, **DR. SABINE BROECK**, a professor of Black Studies and English-Speaking Cultures at University of Bremen in Bremen, Germany. Dr. Broeck is also the president of the Collegium for African American Research (CAAR) and spent a month in residence at Avery Research Center where she gave public lectures, brown bag talks, and participated in the Unleashing the Black Erotic Conference as a presenter. Expressing that "Avery is a treasure trove of exhibitions and materials[...]the world needs to recognize," Dr. Broeck feels Dr. Patricia Lessane has done an "impressive" job of positioning Avery Research Center "from a space of regional interest to a spot on international scholarly maps." To that end, Drs. Broeck and Lessane met with College of Charleston faculty and administrators to discuss ideas and plans for future College of Charleston/University of Bremen collaborations.

Award-winning filmmaker **JULIE DASH** is the Visiting Assistant Professor in the College of Charleston's African American Studies Program (AASST). With the debut of *Daughters of the Dust* in January 1992, Dash became the first African-American woman to have a full-length general theatrical release in the United States. Described as an American cultural experience, *Daughters of the Dust* is one of a select group of American films preserved as American Treasures and is in the United States' National Film Registry. In addition to teaching film classes this fall as part of the AASST at the College of Charleston, Dash will be helping to gather oral histories for the Avery Research Center, and she, Dr. Lessane, and others, are in the development stages of a documentary on the life and work of anthropologist and griot, Verta Mae Grosvenor.





# CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

In September 2013, the Avery Research Center presented its third annual conference, "Unleashing the Black Erotic: Gender and Sexuality—Passion, Power, and Praxis." The four-day conference included national and international scholars discussing race, gender, and sexuality from both historical and contemporary frameworks.

Twelve panels, multiple film screenings, a keynote by Joan Morgan, a theatrical performance by E. Patrick Johnson, the state of the field panel with Treva Lindsey, Marlon Bailey, Kaila Story, and an art exhibit featuring the work of "beki" inspired a lively intellectual exchange of ideas and mediations on the way gender and sexuality impact and shape the Black experience. (Photos by Tony Bell and Donovan Snype)

In 2012, Stanford University's program in African & African American Studies (AAAS), with the assistance of Dr. Harry Elam, began a partnership with the College of Charleston's the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture. Together, our organizations developed a summer internship whereby several Stanford University undergraduate students spend the summer working and researching at the Avery Research Center. This internship allows Stanford undergraduate students to engage in a rigorous research project while gaining professional training and hands-on experience in transcribing and archiving manuscripts, collections, and oral histories. Our first summer intern was Milton Achelpohl.

## SUMMER INTERN'S REFLECTION

by Milton Achelpohl



*"The past is never dead. It's not even past."*

**S**outhern writer William Faulkner's wisdom was never more than a clever quote to me until spending time immersing myself in the history of Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry. Work at the Avery Research Center was defined by my deepened understanding of an aspect of American history that I had never truly explored, a history, I came to find, that is ever present and embodied in the aesthetics of the Charleston lifestyle. From my confusion at finding former slave quarters now bearing

half-addresses to the more recent history of gentrification, race in Charleston was a challenging notion to understand.

I spent my days reading and archiving pieces from the expanse of this history and walked home on streets that were quite literally formed by that history. In the gas lamps, horse-drawn carriages, and colonial costumes, I began to see that when history is not addressed in its entirety, when some stories are favored and others erased, we can never expect to address or redress the issues of the past.

I lived through American history while at Avery Research Center, forced to confront the complex ties of the stories I read in eighteenth-century newspapers and the blogs covering the Zimmerman court case. My time at Avery Research Center solidified my commitment to storytelling. My appreciation for the histories that make us who we are inspired me to use these lessons to reimagine our collective visions of the future.

*Milton Achelpohl is a recent graduate of Stanford University who has returned to his alma mater to pursue a graduate degree in Sociology.*

## AVERY RESEARCH CENTER STUDENT WHO'S WHO

### GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

**Daron Calhoun** works in the archives and Reading Room assisting patrons, and transcribes oral histories, provides museum administrative and technical support, and is the photographer for Education Outreach Program events.

**Azikiwe "Zik" Chandler** is a museum docent. He provides reception and special programs administrative support.

**Bradley Blankemeyer** and **Andrew Cuadadro** work with the Public Historian Mary Battle, assisting with design, digital layout, editing, and archival image acquisitions for online exhibitions to be featured on Avery Research Center's website and with the Lowcountry Digital History Initiative (LDHI) starting in January 2014.

**Elizabeth "Tiz" Wilkins** works in the archives and Reading Room assisting patrons. She is also a museum and Education Outreach docent. Elizabeth is currently cataloging the Avery Research Center's oral histories.

*Andrew, Bradley, Daron, and Elizabeth are in the College of Charleston/Citadel's History M.A. program. Azikiwe is in the College of Charleston's Elementary Education M.A. program.*

### UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANTS

**Destiny Brice, Elyse Monyette, and Olivia Williams** are museum and Education Outreach docents. **Raven Johnson**, also a docent, works in the archives.

Avery Research Center's newly approved docents, (l-r) Elyse Monyette, Raven Johnson, Destiny Brice, Olivia Williams

## Congratulations!

Mr. Curtis J. Franks received the 2013 MOJA Arts Festival award for Excellence in the Arts! Mrs. Cynthia McCottry-Smith of the MOJA Tribute Committee with Curtis J. Franks.





# AVERY INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIP NEWS



**Tony Bell,  
Membership  
Chairman**

## Greetings!

As 2013 draws to a close, we would like to thank you for your continued, unwavering support. Remember that your support of the Avery Institute Board ensures that we can continue to supplement the research center.

Our membership continues to grow monthly and we've made it more convenient to stay current by also accepting membership fees and

donations online at [www.averyinstitute.us](http://www.averyinstitute.us). While visiting the website, be sure to check out the many past and present photo galleries of Avery Research Center events. Also if you haven't renewed your membership yet, consider completing it by the end of the year so you can take the deduction on your taxes in April. Thanks again for helping us to ensure that Avery Research Center remains the community jewel and national treasure that it is.

## REMEMBERING VIRGINIA MORGAN

The Avery Research Center and the Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture Board fondly remember Mrs. Virginia Morgan, who passed away on Monday, August 19, 2013.

We all enjoyed the last time we spent with Mrs. Morgan at the Avery Research Center during the tribute dinner for Mrs. Cynthia McCottry-Smith on July 19, 2013.

Mrs. Virginia Morgan was born to the late Reverend Willis and Evelyn Brown in Charleston, South Carolina on February 16, 1934. She was a proud graduate of Avery Institute High School (Class of 1953) and graduated from Virginia State College, in Ettrick, Virginia, with a major in Sociology and a sequence in Social Work. She was a member of the Sigma Phi Sigma Honor Society and the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

An active woman of service, Morgan served on the board of Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture and the Commission



*She was a proud graduate of  
Avery Institute High School  
(Class of 1953)*

for Women where she functioned for many years. She was also a member of her late father's church, Gethsemane Baptist Church in Charleston, South Carolina, where she was on the Trustee Board.

Certified to teach school under the Southern Board for Colleges and High Schools, she taught South Carolina history, world history, world geography, health, and English to middle and high school students in James Island and North Charleston, South Carolina. Morgan worked with the South Carolina Commission for Farm Workers, the YWCA on Coming Street in Charleston, South Carolina, and Edisto Self-Development of People Incorporation in Edisto Island, South Carolina.

The Avery Research Center and the AIAAHC Board would like to extend sincerest condolences to Mrs. Morgan's family and friends. We thank her son Darryl Goodman for sending a biography and beautiful photograph of his mother.

## Memorials

Ms. Catherine Braxton  
*in memory of*  
Willis & Rebecca Johnson, Sr.

Mrs. Mildred Carr  
*in memory of*  
John W. Carr, Sr.

Loretta Hughes  
*in memory of*  
Mr. & Mrs. James Hughes

Dr. Barbara Williams Jenkins  
*in memory of*  
Herbert DeCosta, Jr.

Ms. Julia Magwood-Harris  
*in memory of*  
Mrs. Lucille Magwood-Pettigrew  
(Avery Class of 1936)

# AVERY INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIP 2013-2014

## HONORARY LIFE

Vivienne Anderson  
Elmore Brown  
Dr. Wendell F. Cox  
Herbert and Emily DeCosta  
Judge Richard E. Fields  
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Lois Simms  
Honorable Lucille Whipper

## GOLD (\$1,000-\$5,000)

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**The Avery Research Center is grateful to the  
Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture  
for its generous contributions and commitment!**



**Members of the Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture board present a check to Avery Research Center's Executive Director, Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane, to further the Avery Research Center's programming endeavors.**

*(l-r): Barbara Nelson, Benjamin Anderson, Julia-Ellen Davis, Angel Payton-Harmon, Patricia Williams Lessane, Priscilla McLeod Robinson, Catherine Boags, John Buncum, Walter G. Brown, Jr., Tony Bell*





**The Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture is located at 125 Bull Street, Charleston, SC 29424.**

**Tours** of the museum galleries are conducted five times a day. Monday through Friday (10:30am, 11:30am, 1:30pm, 2:30pm, and 3:30pm) except on College of Charleston holidays and winter break. Group tours of 5 or more and Saturday tours by appointment only. For more information call 843.953.7609. Admission by donation.

**The Phillis Wheatley Literary and Social Club Reading Room** is open to the public year-round, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-5:00pm except on College of Charleston holidays and winter break. To contact the Reading Room call 843.953.7608.

The Avery Research Center is handicapped accessible. Limited parking is available in our parking lot.

**Visit our website** for more information:  
<http://avery.cofc.edu>

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FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN  
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